# The Crosby Voice

ISSUE No 30
NOVEMBER 1984

NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN BING CROSBY SOCIETY.

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Hello again,

I would like to start off by apologizing in advance for this edition of "The Crosby Voice". I don't believe that it is up to the standards we are trying to set for the magazine.

Where did this one go wrong? Probably the main reason is because we are following it so close to our previous issue and have not yet had time to "accumulate" new material. For example, there wasn't time to allow Vern Taylor to complete Chapter 2 of "Hail KMH".

So why rush an issue through? Well if we didn't, there would only be three issues of "The Crosby Voice" for 1984 and I remember a couple of years back when we did have a three-issue year, several members felt that they did not get their money's worth from their subscription.

Be as that may, the magazine is here and completed, and although we no not have much 'original' material, we have tried to make the best of what we do have.

The most important news in this issue is that we have found a temporary home for our first two meetings of 1985 - the main theatre of the State Film Centre. I say "temporary" because as from mid-year, the State is only screening its own programmes. A great pity too, as the facilities there are marvellous. As well as a magnificent theatre that seats 300, they can also screen every kind of film, every kind

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The Victorian Bing Crosby Society, PO Box 422, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 3205.

Executive Committee: President: Bob Machliss, Vice-President: Ken Orren, Treasurer: Keith Dorman, Secretary: Les Saynor.

General Committee: Bill Bennett, Josie Conway, Sylvia Harding, Jim McManus, George Styles.

USA Rep: Richard Pearson, PO Box 1481, Arlington, Virginia 22210

U.K. Rep: Keith Parkinson, "Meadowcroft", Houghtons Lane, Eccleston, St Helens WA 10 5 LD England.

of video. They're also centrally situated and close to every kind of public transport. Ah well, at least two meetings will be better than none.

What features do we have in this less-than-average issue? On page 5 we have another old advertisement featuring Bing. This one came from a wartime issue of Life magazine. Seems like Bing was used to sell all types of products.

Two people closely associated with Bing died last October. You can read about them on page 9.

Our Collector's Corner features an interesting series of LP's issued on Coral in the early 70's. Only available in the UK, they are real collector's items now. See page 10 for the first record cover.

At last you can get a look at our US rep Richard Pearson. Richard visited England recently, one reason being to see Cilla Black, and ended up with his picture in the paper. See pages 19 and 20. Also on page 20 is a late-60's review of Bing's only Beatles song.

Our centre pages feature a very thoughtful and well-written article which appeared in US papers last Christmas. Thanks to the US members who sent me copies of this one. Thought I'd save it up for our Christmas issue.

On pages 22 - 24 is a reprint of a fascinating article which first appeared in 1889 on the possible uses of the new fangled "talking-machines". The author makes some pretty astute observations as to what its possible uses might be. Although nothing to do with Bing, I thought you might find it interesting. Thanks to Vern Taylor who supplied that one.

On pages 25 and 26 we have an article about Bing's 1964 TV series. This came from the old TV Week.

The Club has decided to order copies of 'The Chronological Bing Crosby' for members. On page 27 you can read why and how you can place your order. Don't delay. We want all orders in by December 14th.

And finally, in 'From Our of the Past', we have some educated comments on Bing's singing from Dr J.T.H. Mize. Turn to page 32 for these.

As usual, we begin though, with Future Functions.

# ✪ FUTURE FUNCTIONS ✪

MONDAY DECEMBER 3RD, MOVIE EVENING

We thought that we'd get together a great double for our last meeting of 1984 (and also our last meeting at the Mobil Centre in South Melbourne.)

And so we have:

DIXIE

from 1943, Bing's first starring feature in colour, supported by

THE BROADWAY MELODY OF 1940

starring Fred Astaire and Eleanor Powell amongst many others. If nothing else, this movie gave us the wonderful "Begin the Beguine" dance sequence featuring Afred and Eleanor dancing to Artie Shaw's music. George Murphy, Frank Morgan and Florence Rice are also in the cast.

Venue, as stated above, will be the Mobil Centre, 2 City Road, South Melbourne, just round the back of the Art Centre. Starting time for the movies is 7.30 sharp, but it is in your interests to get there at around 7.00 if you can, not only because parking is such a problem these days, but also because we have some beaut items for our Christmas raffle and also there will be another big box of records from the Bentleigh Sewing and Record Centre for sale.

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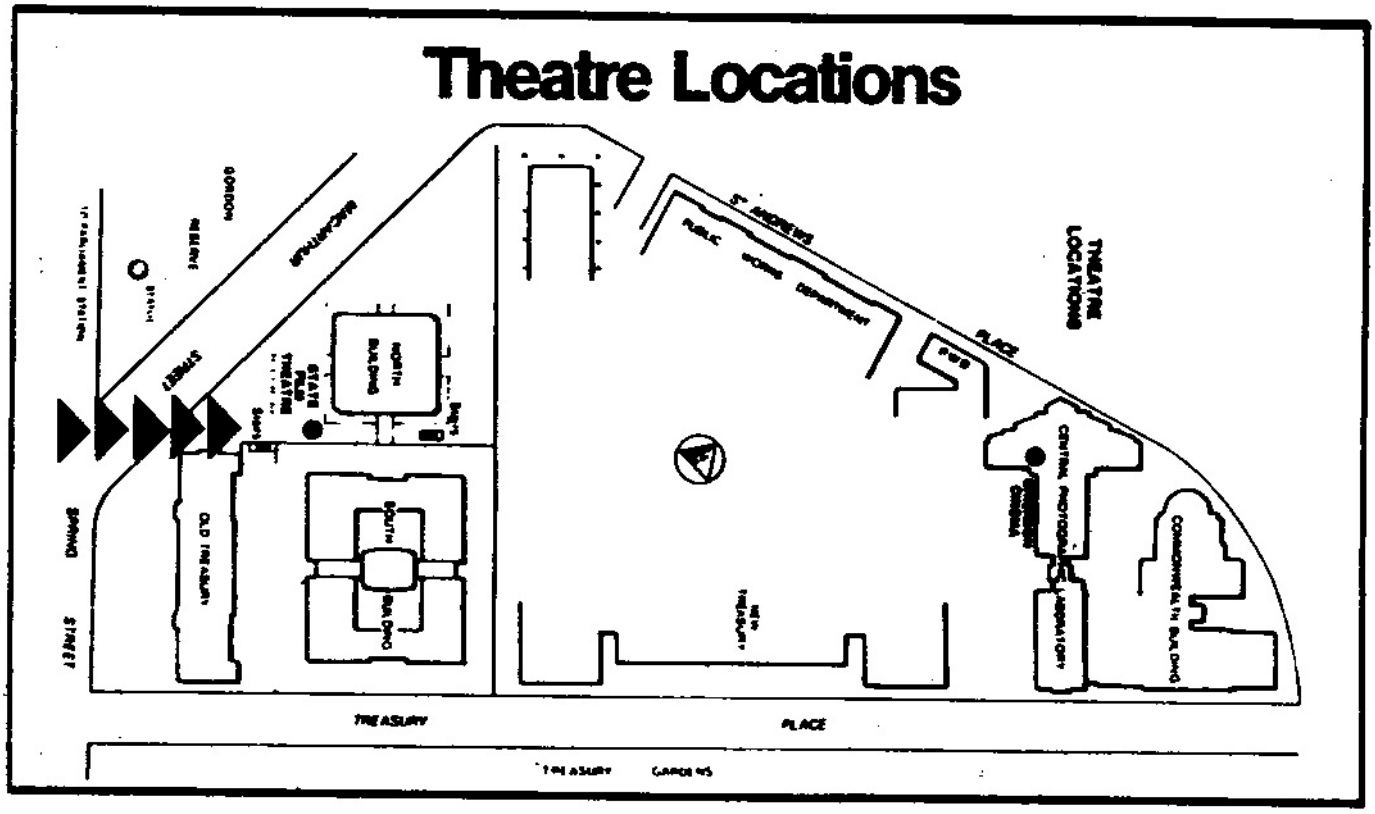
MONDAY FEBRUARY 25TH, 1985 - MOVIE EVENING

As you'll have read in the introduction, we have found a venue for our first two functions for 1985, our meetings of February 18th and April 22nd: the theatre of the State Film Centre.

On the page opposite you can see a map supplied by the Centre. You'll note that there are two theatres - the State Film Theatre on the left and the Grierson Cinema on the right. We are booked into the State Film Theatre. You enter where it says "stairs", the stairs closest to the old Treasury.




The location could not be better situated. Parking is readily available, especially in Treasury Place. The trams stop right outside whilst the underground Parliament Station is just a short walk away!

The State Film Centre also provides kitchen facilities for us to prepare our own supper but of course, we are responsible for tidying and washing. We may call for volunteers from the audience to help us with this task.

As this will be our first function in a different location, please do try to arrive well before the starting time of 7.30 pm. There are sure to be a number of mixups.

In all the fuss, I see that we've neglected to actually tell you what we're screening! I'm sure you'll be pleased to see:

BELLS OF ST MARYS

which needs little further comment. There will also be supporting features of interest.

"You bet RC tastes best!"

says

BING CROSBY

star of "ROAD TO UTOPIA"

a Paramount picture

SOME HORSE-SENSIBLE HINTS!

THE TASTE-TEST CONVINCED BING

Royal Crown Cola tastes best! Try it. Say "R C for me!" That's the quick way to get a big, frosty bottle of Royal Crown Cola—best by taste-test!

"ANOTHER SAFE BET," says BING, "is that stack of Bonds you've got tucked away. Hang on to them, for your own future and the future of our returning veterans. Don't cash them in!"

R C is the quick way to say...

ROYAL CROWN COLA

Best by taste-test

Bing Crosby

# ✪ PAST FUNCTIONS ✪

MONDAY OCTOBER 22ND, MOVIE EVENING

Around 70 members turned up to this one, not a bad turn out, but perhaps not as many as we have been used to. The main feature for the evening was Bing's 1938 feature

PARIS HONEYMOON

which while entertaining, was not Bing's best 1930's movie . Most members felt that Shirley Ross received a bad deal when Bing jilted her for Franciska Gaal - she didn't deserve it, and besides, what did Bing see in that Gaal girl anyway!

The supporting short films were very well received by comparison. And no surprise! They featured such artists as Fats Waller, Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson, Fanny Brice and Hoagy Carmichael. There was also a fascinating short made about 1930 to celebrate Warner Brothers 25th anniversary and which featured glimpses of such famous song writers as Jerome Kern, Richard Rogers (very very young) and Lorenz Hart, Oscar Hammerstein (also very young) and Rudolph Friml.

Anyone arriving from another planet would have thought that our raffle on the night was fixed. From a couple of hundred tickets sold, young John Orren managed to draw two for Stan Sherlock, two for Bill Bennett and one for Ian Burnham! At least he didn't pull out one of dad's tickets!

The other feature of the evening was our Annual General Meeting which was handled, as is the custom, as a very low key affair. Suffice to say the the usual President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Executive Committee were all re-elected. If you don't know who they are, you can find their names at the base of page 1 of this magazine.

Your President's report was received with the general indifference that it deserved. Unfortunately, the Treasurer's Report was not available due to the fact that our accountant was on holidays. As you'll have read earlier, this report is still delayed, but we have assurances that it <u>will</u> definitely be available for our first issue of 1985.

# ✪ PRESIDENT'S REPORT ✪

(With the boring bits removed!)

Welcome to the seventh Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Bing Crosby Society. I suppose that the major influence on our operations in the past year have been our rising costs. To give you an example, our club magazine now costs around $1.50 a copy to produce, and as for postage, even with our special registered publication rate, it still costs about 20 cents to mail out each edition and that works out more than $400 a year! On our old membership fees, that was the equivalent of 67 individual memberships. It's no wonder then that, this year, we've had to raise our subs for the first time in six years.

What have been the highlights of the year just passed? As always, our film evenings draw good attendances, and as far as overseas members are concerned, they are a cause of great envy.

This year we also endeavoured to introduce a record-buying service for members. Unfortunately, due to logistical problems, we have had to modify the system from its initial bulk-buying system to one of direct supply.

1984 was the first year that the clubentered the area of video. Technology now makes it possible for us to supply early Crosby movies to Australian members on home video - movies unobtainable from any other source. And thanks to the generosity of one member, we now also have a video cassette in the club library which features the musical highlights of Bing's early movies. Additional cassettes will be introduced at the end of the year so that virtually the entire range of Crosby features will be covered from first to last. The only problem with this service is that members are very slow to return the tape after borrowing and so there is a long waiting list stretching over two or three months. It would be appreciated if members could keep this tape circulating more quickly.

Of course, the exciting news of the year has been the Chronological Bing Crosby Series of LP's. This new project will ultimately see every one of Bing's records, every take included, issued on long play records. I urge everyone with just the slightest collecting interest to purchase these records to ensure that the series continues.

Our social functions met with mixed success in the past year. The April barbecue went very well and was probably the best we've had. However, our night out at a theatre restaurant was only attended by about twenty members. Possibly the cost of the latter had a deterrent effect, but if anyone can come up with a low cost alternative that will appeal to the bulk of the membership, we would be delighted to hear about it.

The Club's cassette library continues to be a popular feature. This year we added the first season of Philco Radio Time broadcasts and these were well received. In the coming year, we hope to add further Philco shows. Also popular have been the Keith G Hyde Bequest tapes featuring Kraft Music Hall material. Certainly this bequest continues to be a fitting Oribute to Keith's memory.

The biggest blow to the Society this year would have been Mobil's decision to cease offering it's theatrette to outside groups. We understand that their decision is a result of the difficulties being encountered internationally by petrol companies and will be eternally grateful to Mobil for they service they have offered us over the past six years, but of course, it has caused us enormous problems (as it no doubt has the many other groups who also used the facilities offered). Although the State Film Centre will provide a theatre for our first two meetings of 1985, we are still looking for a permanent new home.

As usual, there are a number of people whom we must thank for their enormous contribution to the Society. And heading the list is our old friend Vernon Wesley Taylor. Vern lives in the United States and in all the world, there is no greater supporter of our group. Those of you who read the Club magazine will need no reminding of Vern and his accomplishments.

Whilst on the other side of the world, there is another person to be thanked, and that is our U.S. Rep, Richard Pearson. Richard does a great job looking after our American members and also saves us quite a few dollars on postage.

Back here in Australia, of course, we have our Committee to thank - Josie and Sylvia, Ken and Keith, Les, Bill and George.

And finally, a big thank you to <u>you</u> the members - for your support, enthusiasm and interest. For you <u>are</u> - the Victorian Bing Crosby Society.

END

## Wednesday, October 17, 1984

# Announcer Carpenter dead at 84

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (UPI) — Kenneth L. Carpenter, the veteran television and radio personality dubbed by Bing Crosby "the Man With the Golden Voice," has died. He was 84.

Carpenter died Tuesday at St. John's Hospital after a brief illness.

A native of Avon, Ill., Carpenter arrived in Hollywood in 1929 and joined radio station KFI as an announcer. He was an announcer for the Rose Bowl football game in 1935, and after that national exposure he joined NBC.

## Friday, October 12, 1984

# Restaurateur 'Trader Vic' dies after short illness

HILLSBOROUGH, Calif. (UPI) — Restaurateur "Trader Vic" Bergeron, who started a hamburger stand in Oakland, Calif., a half-century ago and wound up running 21 restaurants in six nations, died Thursday in his home after a short illness at the age of 81.

He was also a successful author, sculptor, painter and jewelry-maker. He kept expanding his operations and opened restaurants in Canada, Munich, Tokyo, London and Singapore. He wrote several cookbooks and drink guides, many articles, a children's book for his grandchildren and an autobiography.

He leaves four children and 12 grandchildren. He divorced his first wife, Esther, who was the mother of his four children, and later married Helen Harwood. Both women survive.

# ✪ COLLECTORS' CORNER ✪

Back at the beginning of the 1970's, Coral Records in the U.K. issued no less than seven Bing Crosby LP's. These records were wonderful for collectors in that they featured Decca material (cont)

(I LOVE YOU TRULY: Let me call you sweetheart, The touch of your lips, Lovely Lady, Beyond compare, I love you truly, Just a-wearyin' for you, The folks who live on the hill, Let me whisper I love you, Sweetheart waltz, The very thought of you, Too marvellous for words, I still love to kiss you goodnight.)

never issued on LP, or if issued, many many years ago. Of course, the most remarkable thing about the records was the price - just 99 pence! In these inflationary times, an amazingly low sum of money to part with.

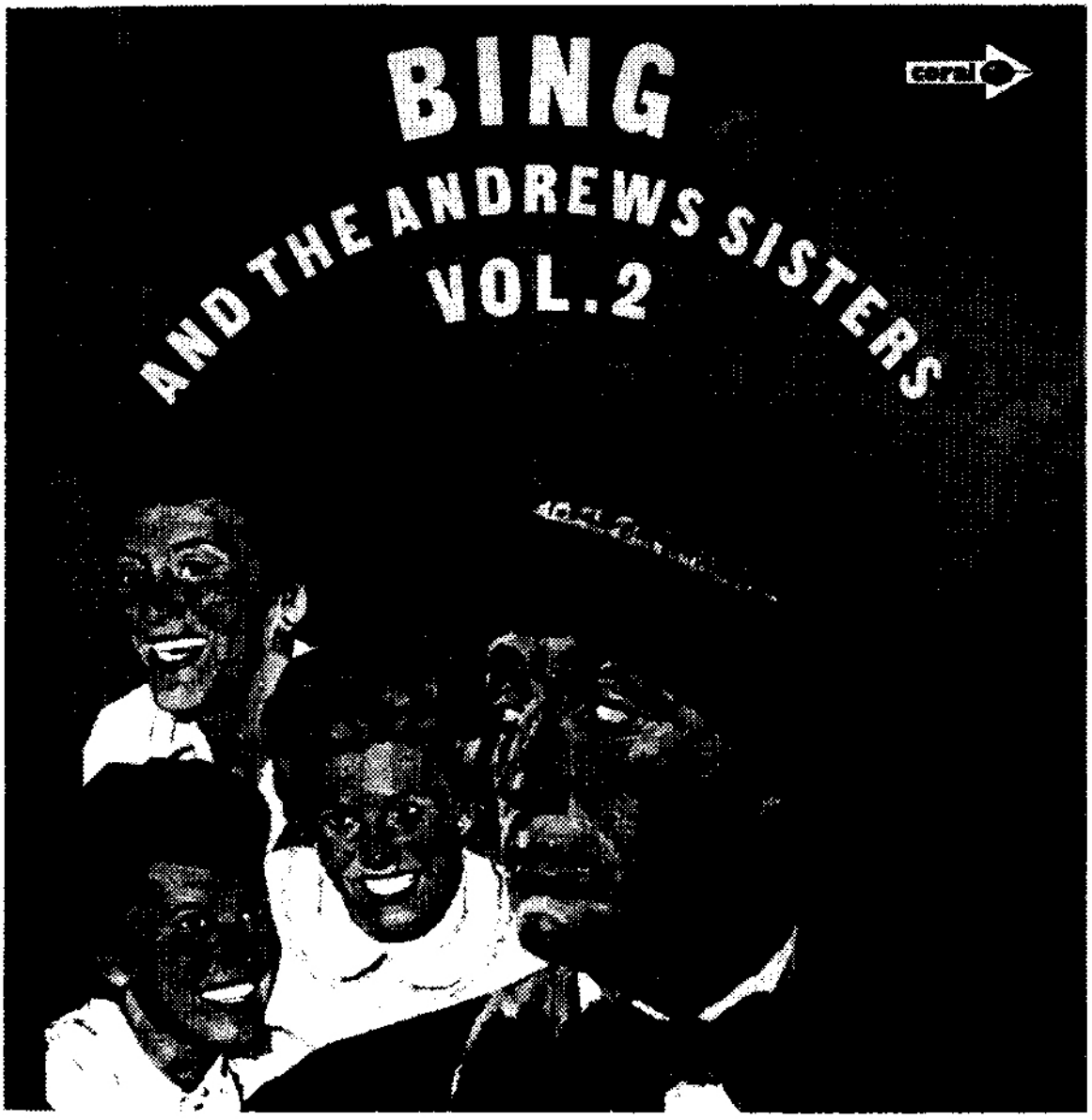
(I'LL SING YOU A SONG OF THE ISLANDS: Song of the islands, Aloha Oe, South Sea Island Magic, Hawaiian paradise, Dancing under the stars, Palace in Paradise, When you dream about Hawaii, Sweet Hawaiin chimes, Song of Old Hawaii, Aloha Kuu Ipo Aloha, Paradise Isle, Sing me a song of the islands.)

Unfortunately the records did have one 'flaw'. The majority were 'reprocessed' into stereo and what was worse, given cavernous echo effects! A great shame, because the material they contained certainly did not (cont)

(RHYTHM ON THE RANGE: Sierra Sue, Whistling in the wildwood, Along the Santa Fe trail, Take me back to my boots and saddle, Tumbling tumbleweeds, You are my sunshine, Ridin' down the canyon, Prairieland lullaby, Legend of old California, Silver on the sage, San Antonio rose, Home on the range.

require any kind of embellishment. This series was also important in that it finally brought together on LP, virtually all of Bing's sides with the Andrews Sisters. Incredible to think that this major cache of Crosby had

(BING AND THE ANDREWS SISTERS VOL 1: South America take it away, Quicksilver, Forsaking all others, Route 66, Good good good, Don't fence me in, Pistol packin' mama, The three caballeros, Have I told you lately that I Love you, Sparrow in the tree top, Black ball ferry line, Yodelling ghost.)

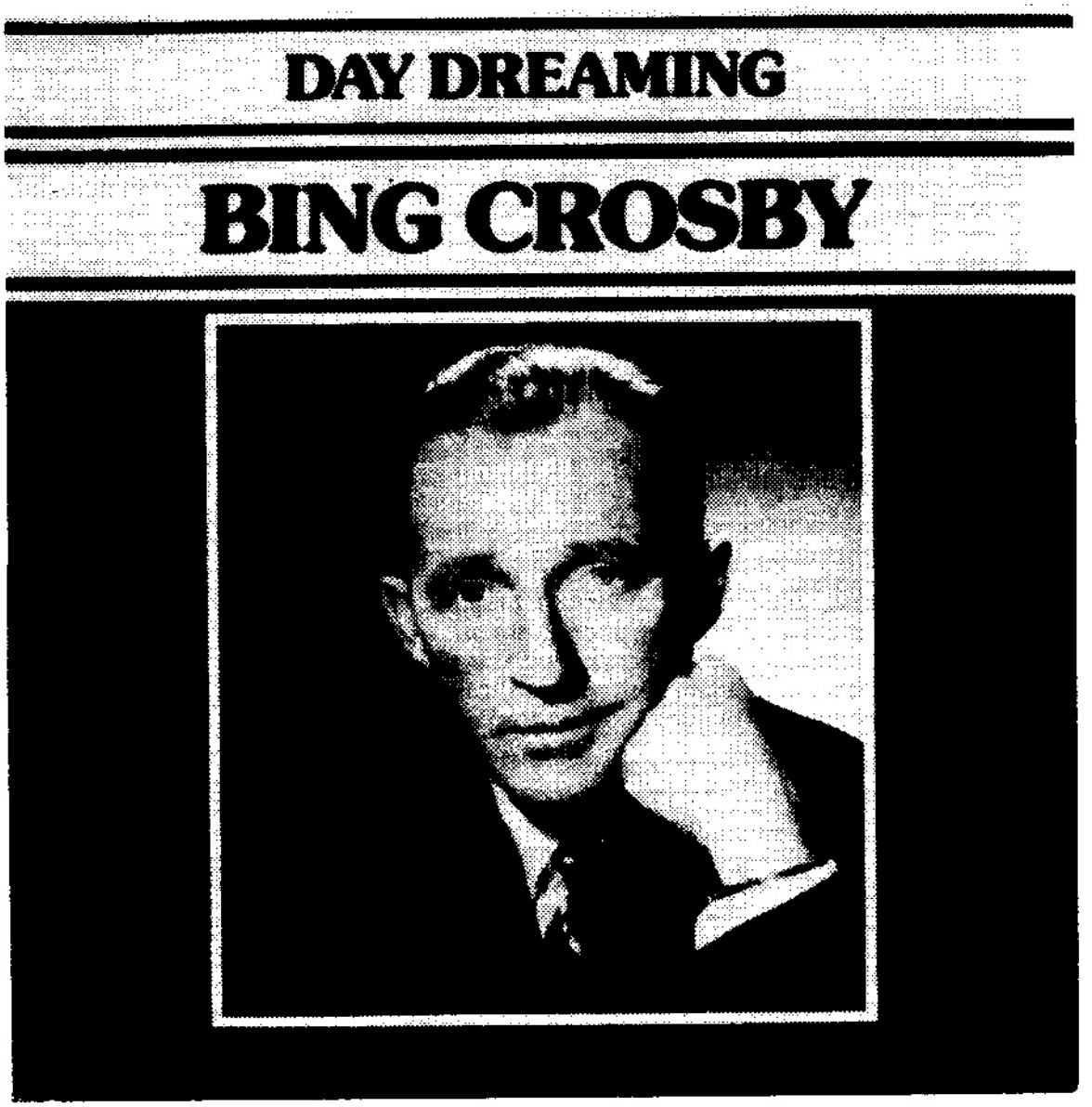



lain in the vaults for so long without being re-issued, especially considering the enduring popularity of the Andrews Sisters. What makes these Coral records rare today is that shortly after issuing them, Decca in the U.K. lost the right

(BING AND THE ANDREWS SISTERS VOL 2: A hundred and sixty acres, The freedom train, Go west young man, Ciribiribin, Vict'ry polka, Ask me no questions, Lock stock and barrel, At the flying "W", Betsy, Along the Navajo trail, Yodelin' jive, Weddin' day.)

to MCA material coming from the USA, and so, after only a matter of months on the shelf, these seven LP's were withdrawn from circulation, never to be re-issued! In fact, you can tell from the lack of trouble that Coral

(BING AND THE ANDREWS SISTERS VOL 3; There's no business like show business, Tallahassee, Apalachicola Fla, Life is so peculiar, High on the list, I'll si-si ya in Bahia, Cool Water, South Rampart Street parade, The live oak tree, Is you is or is you ain't ma baby, There's a fellow waiting in Poughkeepsie, Ac-cent-tchu-ate the positive, You don't have to know the language, Anything you can do.)




went to with the last two labels, that they knew that the end was coming and couldn't be bothered spending money. Never mind, it's the contents not the covers that matter and in many ways, issue seven was the best of them all!

(DAY DREAMING: Day dreaming, You are the one, Between a kiss and a sigh, I'm building a sailboat of dreams, Wrap your troubles in dreams, Do you care? Somebody loves me, Darling je vous aime beaucoup, You and I, Don't break the spell, Maybe, I'd know you anywhere, Miss you.)

GERALD NACHMAN

# Christmas Card

Someone around here was bad-mouthing Bing Crosby the other day, calling him the Barry Manilow of yesteryear. A good line, though rather un-American and unfair.

As I quickly pointed out, at least Crosby didn't write his own songs and wear ruffly silk blouses.

I must say, I miss Bing Crosby at Christmas for precisely the corny reason you would think — for that last 10 minutes of some forgettable family yuletide special, when the camera would tiptoe in for a closeup as Crosby sang our winter anthem.

I fell for it every year, especially the last one he did it. I'm not given to premonitions, but I was unusually moved, more than I'd ever been before when he sang The Song. I must have felt he wouldn't be around for many more Christmases, white or otherwise.

This time, when the camera crept in for a close-up, Crosby looked older than he did in my mind's eye; despite his evergreen spirit and choirboy face, the wrinkles were deeper. Bing Crosby was, unthinkably, an old man.

If Crosby could age — that flip, light-as-air entertainer who sang so serenely so easily, as if with a pipe in his mouth and a golf club in his hand — what hope was there for us?

When he died, it seemed a crummy thing to do, as it always does when someone dies whom you first knew as a kid and figured would be around at least as long as you, joking, hoofing and insulting Bob Hope.

It wasn't quite a holiday each year until Crosby sang The Song and musically declared Christmas open. It was, I admit, an unabashedly sentimental moment, but he always brought it off; and what is Christmas if not sentimental?

I never appreciated The Song until I'd reached a certain age and been through enough Christmases and heard Crosby sing it so often I'd stopped listening. The last time he did it, I realized it's not just a pretty song, or a reverie. It's a little offhand prayer.

Crosby always made it sound like a man yearning for not just a white Christmas, but for an earlier, quieter, more peaceful, *younger* Christmas. Nobody else (except perhaps Perry Como) can make it sound as warm without ruining it with stickiness, as I am doubtless doing now.

It's a good sturdy song, the only modern carol that can co-exist with the Top Nativity 10, but it needed Crosby to put it across every year. Decade after decade, December upon December, it was his gift.

Sinatra hasn't the needed coziness to make it sound right. Frank Sinatra means many things, but treetops glistening and children listening to hear sleighbells in the snow is not one of them.

Nobody else could call up the memories Crosby could — "Going My Way," "The Bells of St. Mary's," "Holiday Inn," plus hundreds of radio, TV shows and 30,000 songs, duets and dance steps.

Toward the end, Crosby got to be taken for granted, because he took himself for granted. He helped take the starch out of singing. Crosby sang the way everyone else hums.

Crosby sang "White Christmas" pure, as nonchalant as he spoke, but with strong, straightforward feeling. No warbling, no gesturing, just the words, reflected in those wistful, shiny blue eyes.

He may have been a stern father and a distant man, but you can't imagine Scrooge with a voice like that. When Crosby sang "White Christmas," you forgot everything and, for two minutes, felt tenderly towards people, the original concept.

Ever since Bing Crosby died, Christmas seems not quite right, a shade less merry and bright, a favorite ornament missing from the tree.

San Francisco Chronicle

Fri., December 23, 1983

CILLA

# U.S. fan flies in just for Cilla

**LIVERPOOL singing star Cilla Black's most-travelled if not greatest fan breezed into South Wales last night ... all the way from Arlington, Virginia.**

United States government employee Mr Richard Pearson, 36, paid 200 dollars for a trans-Atlantic flight once he learned that Cilla was appearing at Porthcawl's Grand Pavilion.

He dropped a line to show organisers Ogwr Borough Council and booked the best seats for both of last night's performances.

Richard is a member of the Cilla Circle of Fans and has been a long-distance supporter for the past 11 years.

"I have come to Britain to see Cilla — but now that I'm here I'll obviously stay on a while," he said after arriving at the resort.

"But it's Cilla I've come to see."

He collected his two £5 tickets and later met the star herself.

He also got VIP treatment from the Ogwr Mayor, Mr Gordon Embling.

"I admire her very much — I guess it's her personality," said Mr Pearson between shows.

"I've met her briefly once before, at the Palladium, but I don't suppose she'll remember that.

"I have most of her records and I doubt if she has a bigger fan on the other side of the Atlantic.

"I haven't seen many Americans in the hotel tonight," he added with a smile.

Mr Pearson arrived at the first of last night's concerts, complete with the latest Circle notes, and also hopes to be at the singer's television spectacular at the beginning of October.

Cilla broke her usual routine to meet Mr Pearson between shows.

# BEATLES NUMBER SUITS BING

*By Graham Reade*

**The old groaner, Bing Crosby, has a very interesting new single out this week of, believe it or not, the Beatles' "Hey Jude."**

And there is a new album by that formidable combination of Diana Ross and the Supremes with the Temptations.

Bing sings "Hey Jude" well, and I think the publicity blurb's prediction that it is going to be one of the most talked about records of the year could be right, particularly as the Beatles seem to be getting to much adverse publicity.

It is already beginning to appear on some strong radio playlists, and could very easily build into a winner's circle entry for the Old Groaner.

"Hey Jude" opens rather impressively with a full orchestral introduction, after which Bing glides effortlessly through John Lennon's lyrics, giving them the full leisurely, personalised Crosby treatment, and proving that his singing days are far from over, as some sceptics would try to have us believe.

The other side of the disc is a very pleasant rendition of last year's top bar room ballad, "Lonely Street." The disc is Bing's first for Jimmy Bowen's new Amos Productions.

Some of you may be interested to learn that that the old Crosby Club of Australia has recently been re-formed, and anyone interested in joining should write to me at The News for further details. **(London HL 8737)**

* *

# ☆NEW MEMBERS☆

As is our custom once a year, we present a list of members who have joined the ranks in the last 12 months. Welcome to:

Margaret Reece, 14 Morden Court, Nunawading, Vic 3131.
JohnMarshall, 39 Kings Rd, Teddington, Middlesex, England
Ian Burnham, 218 Darebin Road, Thornbury, Vic 3071
Syd Smyth, PO Box 366, Mona Vale, NSW 2103
Raymond & Winifred Newson, 5 Alverstone Grove, Mount Eliza, Vic 3930
Michael Riedy, 50 Brays Rd, Concord, NSW 2137
Tom Walsh, 3/19 Kireep Rd, Balwyn Vic 3103
John & Gail Allan, 16 Service Rd, Hampton Vic 3188
Norm Burmeister, 3/59 Iona St, Black Rock, Vic 3193
Virgil E Edwards, 2180 Roland Way, Eugene, Oregon 97401 USA
Gene Douglas, 5357 Portland Ave South, Minneapolis Mn 55417 USA
Leslie Street, 8 Wyfan Place, Mynaochdy, Cardiff. S. Glam CP4 3DT U.K.
Cecil Serio, PO Box 1, Harmans, Maryland 21077 USA
William Bryant, 3 3/17 Taylor St, Mordialloc, Vic 3195
Phil & Lucy Beilby, Unit 4, 3-17 Taylor St, Parkdale Vic 3195
Peter Murphy, PO Box 133, Elwood, Vic 3184
Estelle Smith, 149 Essex St, West Footscray 3012
Russ Rullman, 159 S Mansfield Ave, L.A. Cal 90036, USA
Col Robert Stratiff, 3913 Grovewood Rd, Hopewell, Virginia, USA 23860
John Phelan, 7 Merrimu St, Carnegie, Vic 3183
Don Haizeleden, York House, 1 Cambria Rd, Camberwell, London SE5 9AB U.K.
John Joyce, 5 Shelley Rd, Short Heath, Willenhall, West Midlands U.K.

I've left John's name until last so that I can point out that this John Joyce is not the John Joyce who issues the 'Around the Hall' LP'S! Neither is he the third John Joyce in the U.K. who is also a Crosby fan but is not yet a member of this club! So when you decide to write to one of them, the Joyce is up to you.

You might be interested to know that since our club began, we have signed up no less than 441 members. I wish that all were still active today, but some have dropped by the wayside over the years. Nonetheless, we have a very healthy membership which continues to grow year by year and that is very encouraging.

1889

# THE NEW TALKING-MACHINES

## by Philip G. Hubert, Jr.

THE first idea of a genuine talking-machine appears to belong to Thomas A. Edison, who, in 1875, took out patents upon a device intended to reproduce complex sounds, such as those of the human voice. Of the thousands of persons who in that year visited the small room in the Tribune building, in New York, where the first phonograph was for months on exhibition, very few were found to hope much for the invention. It was apparently a toy of no practical value; its talking was more or less of a caricature upon the human voice, and only when one knew what had been said to the phonograph could its version be understood.

The defects of the early phonograph were so great that Edison found it impossible to interest capitalists in perfecting it. It reproduced singing and whistling with wonderful accuracy, but as a talker it was merely a curiosity. As such it was exhibited throughout the country, and the few hundreds then made soon found their way into college laboratories and museums. Edison went to work at his electric light.

More than a score of times, during the last ten years, he has said to me, "I wish I had leisure to work at my phonograph. When I get rich I will astonish the world with it." Two years ago he found himself in a position to take it up again, and he has devoted nearly two years to the task of making the phonograph of commercial use. He believes that he has succeeded.

The new phonograph takes up, with its table, about the space occupied by a sewing-machine, and might at first be taken for one. Underneath the table is an electric battery or a treadle, according to the power used in moving the cylinder. The wax cylinders, or phonograms, as they are called, are two inches in diameter, and vary in length from one to ten inches, according to the amount of talking which is to be engraved upon them. The smallest size is about that of a napkin ring, and will be sufficient for an ordinary business letter of two or three hundred words. The wax surface is highly polished; when it has been through the apparatus, the marks or engraving upon it can be seen only with a glass. When a message is to be recorded, one of these phonograms is slipped over the permanent steel cylinder, which is set in motion, and the diaphragm, carrying its stylus on the under side, is lowered toward the wax surface until a slight grating sound announces that it touches. Then the talking may begin. It is not necessary to talk louder than in an ordinary conversation, but distinct articulation is required. For reproduction, the stylus is raised, and the "follower" or sounding-spring is brought into contact with the wax.

The amount of talking upon a cylinder depends, of course, upon the speed of the talker; one page of this magazine might easily be recorded upon a cylinder ten inches long. The exact value of the reproduction, both in the phonograph and the graphophone, is still, according to my own experience in a score of tests, something of a lottery. With a phone at my ear, I have heard Mr. Edison's phonograph read off a page of Nicholas Nickleby so clearly that not one word in twenty was lost; the phonograph's voice was as distinct and as loud as that of a telephone in good working order.

When it comes to music, the present achievements are wonderful. The phonograph will reproduce any kind of music — singing, the piano, violin, cornet, oboe, etc. — with a beauty of tone and accuracy which will astonish the musician. It is possible, also, to magnify musical sounds without distorting them, as often happens where speech is concerned. The phonograph itself cannot cost more than fifty dollars, and the wax cylinders used upon them scarcely more than writing-paper. Once a cylinder has been "engraved," or has had a message recorded upon it, it can be passed through the phonograph any number of times, apparently without deterioration. Mr. Edison has some phonograms, containing pages of Nicholas Nickleby, which have been read out thousands of times by the phonograph, and no indications of wear are audible. Finally, bear in mind that having once obtained a good phonogram, it can be multiplied *ad infinitum* at nominal cost, and what a wonderful prospect opens before us! The duplication of a phonogram is as simple as it is perfect. The wax phonogram is placed in a bath, and coated with nickel by electric deposition. When the nickel plate is sufficiently thick, it is stripped off, giving an exact mould, a die representing every minute indentation of the original wax. In order to make a second or a thousandth wax fac-simile, wax sheets can be pressed against the nickel die. Edison estimates that novels of the length of Nicholas Nickleby could be sold in phonogram shape for a few cents. A good reader would first have to read the whole book to the phonograph and the multiplication of the resulting phonograms would then be simply a matter of detail. So also with music, — songs, piano pieces, symphonies, operas. There seems to be no reason why a play cannot be reproduced so as to give infinite pleasure. The length of the phonograph's message is limited only by the size of the phonograms. Edison estimates that Nicholas Nickleby can be transcribed upon six cylinders, six inches in diameter by twelve inches in length. But some one will soon discover a method of recording the phonographic message upon an endless roll, so that the man who cannot sleep at night will be able to have the machine read to him hour after hour without the trouble of changing cylinders.

As a saving in the time given up to writing, the phonograph promises to far outstrip the typewriter. The business man can dictate to the

phonograph as fast as he can talk, and the wax cylinder, inclosed in a suitable box, can be sent off by mail to read out its message perhaps thousands of miles away. Or else, as is now done in Mr. Edison's laboratory in Orange, N.J., the typewriter girl can print out upon paper what her employer has dictated to the phonograph. For the reporter, the editor, and the author who can dictate, a device has been adapted to the phonograph which causes it to stop its message at every tenth word, and to continue only when a spring is touched. Thus, the editor can dictate his article to the phonograph as he does now to his stenographer, and when the printer at the case gets the resulting phonogram the instrument will dictate to him in short sentences. If he cannot set up the sentence at one hearing, it will repeat its ten words. If he is satisfied, it reads out ten words more.

I really see no reason why the newspaper of the future should not come to the subscriber in the shape of a phonogram. It would have to begin, however, with a table of contents, in order that one might not have to listen to a two hours' speech upon the tariff question in order to get at ten lines of a musical notice. But think what a musical critic might be able to do for his public! He might give them whole arias from an opera or movements from a symphony, by way of proof or illustration. The very tones of an actor's or singer's voice might be reproduced in the morning notice of last night's important dramatic or musical event. It has been remarked, by the way, that business letters and orders by phonograph would not be so binding as when put in black and white upon paper. A little wax cylinder covered with microscopic dots would not be considered as good evidence in court. But if the speaker's voice, inflection, accent, were so reproduced that witnesses could swear to the personality, would it not suffice?

Mr. Edison says that by the beginning of 1890 the phonograph will be far less of a curiosity than the telephone is now. For the last year it has been the same story, — the phonographs would be ready for sale next month. It was so a year ago, and it may be so a year from now. But these many delays, which have made people rather skeptical as to the doings of the phonograph, do not make the wonders already achieved less wonderful, or warrant any doubts as to the vast possibilities which the little device contains.

# BING'S GOT 'EM BAFFLED

*From our Hollywood office*

**ASK anybody in show business why Bing Crosby—aged nearly 60 and a millionaire long since—has taken on the grind of a weekly TV series and you'll get a common reaction: Bafflement.**

Ask Bing himself and he'll tell you: "I'm an actor. I get a great deal of satisfaction out of working. I like the idea of a challenge.

"Anyway, you can't play golf all the time."

It's well known that nothing gives Bing more pleasure than "keeping a hand in show business" while still being able to enjoy the fruits of his success.

But another actor, who is also a good friend, maintains: "The guy's nuts to give up the comforts of home and family to go back to work.

"There's got to be another reason why he's going into weekly TV."

There is—and it points up the serious side of the man who has given pleasure to millions as a singer, actor and comedian, and now heads his own production company.

Bing explains: "When a man in my position has a company like I do, hundreds of jobs are involved.

"I can't just quit show business altogether merely because my own family is taken care of. Other people's families depend on my working, too.

"I've got a sense of responsibility to every man who works for me, just as they have towards me. And I'm not ready to drop my responsibilities just like that."

Result is the **Bing Crosby Show**, which was to begin production in Hollywood on Monday, June 15.

Bing has done his share of TV work before, notably some dozen hour-long variety specials, but his new program will be completely different.

"I play an architectural engineer, Bing Collins, who has been married 20 years to the same woman," he says.

"We'll have two daughters—one a typical teenager, the other a precocious 11-year-old with a genius IQ.

"This isn't going to be the usual (domestic situation) series. Dad isn't going to be a jerk who's henpecked by mom and the kids.

"We want the relationship between my wife and me to be a warm, romantic one.

"Our writers and Steve — Steven Gethers, who brought the idea to my production company and who is our producer-writer — are working hard to capture this rare thing that we think will make the show outstanding."

As Bing's TV wife, viewers will see actress Beverly Garland.

Says producer Gethers: "She was our number one choice. She's a very warm, versatile actress and the chemistry between her and Bing should be perfect."

Beverly is no stranger to television. She was a policewoman in the old **Decoy** series and has since made guest appearances on virtually all top shows.

Teenager Carol Faylen was chosen as the elder daughter. She's the real-life daughter of Frank Faylen, who is seen as the father of **Dobie Gillis.**

Eleven-year-old Diane Sherry will play the precocious younger child.

Making the series has its own problems for Bing.

He, wife Kathy and their family recently moved from Los Angeles to a luxury home in the exclusive San Francisco suburb of Hillsborough, 450 miles away.

Bing is solving the situation by doing the episodes "Fred MacMurray style."

Every scene in which MacMurray appears during a season's run of **My Three Sons** is shot in a three-month period. Bing plans to do the same.

"If all goes as scheduled, I'll be working every single minute Monday through Friday for three months. I'll come home to Kathy and our three young 'uns on weekends," Bing says.

He adds: "Fred says it's a tough way to do it but having the other nine months free to play golf and fish will be worth it."

Fans of Crosby, the crooner, will be happy to know that he'll sing on his show.

"You see, our character Bing Collins just happens to have put himself through college by singing in a band, so he'll sing every so often when the spirit moves him," Crosby says. #

# RECORD ORDERS

John McNicholas writes that he has been unable to find a reliable distributor for 'The Chronological Bing Crosby' in Australia and therefore, members can order direct from him.

The total cost of both albums send air mail to this country is £17.60 (£10.00 for the albums @ £5 each + $7.60p Air Parcel and packing). At the time of writing (late November), the exchange rate works out at close enough to $27.00 Australian.

As a service to members, this Society is prepared to order records on a direct-supply basis from John. That is, if you send us your cheque for $27, we will send off one basic order to the UK and John will mail your records directly to you.

Due to the coming Christmas holiday period, we will set a date of Friday December 14th for all your cheques to be in. Any cheques received after this date will be returned.

With the Christmas break and seasonal mail deliverys, I would imagine that you should get your records towards the end of January.

Please make all cheques payable to "The Victorian Bing Crosby Society".

WRITE DIRECT

Alternatively, you can order direct from John McNicholas if you prefer. His address is 18 Greer Road, Harrow Weald, Middlesex HA 3 6JF, England.

OR WAIT FOR KEN HENDERSON

We understand that Ken Henderson of the Bentleigh Sewing and Record Centre, 348 Centre Rd, Bentleigh, Victoria has ordered a quantity of records for his shop. You may prefer to wait until these arrive. You'll probably save a dollar or two, also.

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# HELP!

Two of the Keith Hyde Bequest tapes have gone missing from the Club's library, and we can't find them anywhere. Nos: KHB 23 and 24. What's worse, we don't have a list of what was on them to re-record! If you borrowed the tapes at any time and took a copy, could we please borrow your copy to check the contents. We would be eternally grateful for any help you can offer.

# BITS 'N' PIECES

* We noted recently the passing of Caesar Petrillo. Who you may ask was Petrillo? Well he was the leader of the Musician's Union back in the 1940's who was responsible for the recording strikes of 1942 and 1947. With hindsight, the strikes were probably a good thing in that they gave a fairer dealer to musicians who formerly received no payment when their records were used in juke boxes and on the radio, but at the time, they deprived us of almost two years of Crosby records. One wonders what extra Crosby songs we might now have were it not for those strikes. By the way, Petrillo was in his 90's when he died!

* Are you planning on moving house? Please remember to include the society on your list of people to advise. We have several members who probably think we've gone out of business because they receive no more mail from us! Recently we had a case of a member moving to Sydney without telling us. We only found out when a friend informed us of his new address. The member in question was very pleased that we'd found him but mystified as to how we had!

* Did Bing ever sign the recording wax? Recently, when going through my collection (and I have many other records besides Crosby's), I discovered that the centre of certain old 78's actually bore the signatures of the recording artist. Seems like they must have used a metal stylus to scratch their names into the soft recording wax. Artists I have found include Glenn Miller, Weber and Fields and a young John McCormack on an early Odeon record who also added the comment: "Ireland for ever!!!". I've not read much about this practice. Can anyone tell us more?

* On the seventh anniversary of Bing's passing, a number of Crosby societies around the world (ourselves included) clubbed together to take out a small tribute ad in the American show business magazine, Variety. This project was the brain child of UK member John Marshall and we hope to feature the ad in the next issue of The Crosby Voice.

# CORRECTIONS

The following amenedments (supplied by Carroll Carroll) arrived too late to be included in part 1 of 'HAIL KMH' last issue. However, we thought that they should be mentioned.

PAGE 11, third paragraph. Virginia Miles shoulbe be Virginia Meyers.

PAGE 12, bottom line. Delete 'Carpenter'.

PAGE 13, top lines. Should read: "Then on Tuesday evening he would send the script to our home by messenger. Bing would go over his copy vary carefully, adding or changing words or adding his own. This was generally to make his words flow easier. (END SENTENCE)

PAGE 14, bottom paragraph, third line. " mad ad gab" should read "Mad Ave gab". (Madison Avenue venacular, to you!)

## PHILCO RADIO TIME CASSETTES

When we supplied this list of Philco Show tapes in the club library, we managed to get the numbering system all wrong. This is the correct listing. Major guest artists are shown in brackets, two shows per tape.

PRT 1 (Bob Hope/Spike Jones)
PRT 2 (Les Paul Trio/Ralph Mendez)
PRT 3 (Ezio Pinza/Burl Ives)
PRT 4 (Judy Garland/Jimmy Durante)
PRT 5 (Jerry Colonna/Peggy Lee)
PRT 6 (Christmas Show/Joe Frisco)
PRT 7 (Mickey Rooney/Al Jolson)
PRT 8 (George Jessel/Hope, Lamour)
PRT 9 (Bea Lille/Groucho Marx)
PRT 10 (Judy Garland/Andrews Sisters)
PRT 11 (Al Jolson/Peggy Lee)
PRT 12 (Danny Kaye/Jack Benny)
PRT 13 (Al Jolson/Alec Templeton)
PRT 14 (Jimmy Durante/Burl Ives)
PRT 15 (Groucho Marx/Al Jolson)
PRT 16 (Groucho Marx/Maurice Chevalie
PRT 17 Charles Magnante/Fred Allen & Connee Boswell
PRT 18 (Ethel Merman / Bob Hope)

Have you borrowed any of these tapes yet? They're proving very popular with members. The Philco series was probably Bing's best on radio. Good guests, big budget, good writing. They also co-incide with a time when Bing was number 1 at the box office which perhaps adds a little extra enthusiasm to the project.

The Philco series ran three years and we hope to add further cassettes covering the latter programes during 1985.

# LETTERS

From Vic Bridger, PO Box 92, Ferny Hills, Queensland 4055

We are away and running with THE QUEENSLAND BING CROSBY SOCIETY. This is our first official communication, and I have deliberately held off from writing until I was sure that things would progress satisfactorily. We commenced operations with our inaugral meeting last May which was combined with a social Barbecue. At this meeting, we watched a video copy of 'Sing You Sinners' together with a video of Greats at Carnegie Hall. At our follow-up meeting in July, we showed 'Starmaker' and in September and October we featured a two-part presentation on Bing - his life and songs. This was put together by one of our members on tape, accompanied by narration. For our October meeting, we arranged for the ABC to give us a little promotion. Bing was also featured on 4MBS the Sunday prior while on the Saturday, Gary Ord gave us a mention. Also on the Saturday, Bruce Short devoted his entire programme to Crosby. Our next meeting will be in February, and perhaps we can arrange for a movie for that occasion.

(We are happy to report that the QBCS has decided to affiliate with the VBCS. All the members are welcome to utilize our facilities whenever they desire to. We wish the new Society well and every success. How about you members in other states? Why don't you get together and form an official group. We'll be happy to offer you affiliation also. B.M.)

From Ron Holmes, Queenstown, Tasmania

May I make a suggestion for a future article? One on "Bing's War Records". i.e. the places he travelled to entertaining the troops, V-Discs, special films, etc. (Good idea Ron. Now who would like to volunteer for such a project? BM) Please forward any further information on 'The Chronological Bing Crosby'. A project of this magnitude is certainly worthy of support. The only critcism could possibly be that the proposed number of LP's per annum is too small!

From Richard Pearson, Arlington

The Crosby tribute in Britain was very nice. Around 80 people turned up which was very good considering that last years's

tribute only attraced 45. I met John Marshall, Reg Bristo, Michael Crampton. John Joyce now wants to mail his records to Al Sutton only. Previously he mailed to Al and myself. Since most of our members are Club Crosby members also, they can get John Joyce's new releases from Al direct. That means at the moment that I'm not ordering any records for American members.
Hope you enjoyed the newspaper article. Cilla is quite a dish! Of course I managed to steal a kiss! The article is of course exaggerated.

From Frans van der Kolff, Amsterdam

I enjoyed the article on the Kraft Music Hall very much. The subject is really in the picture nowadays, with the article in the Crosby Voice and the last two issues of Bing. I'm glad some more information is surfacing on this radio series.
I have just received the first volumes of 'The Chronological Bing Crosby'. They look and sound very very good. But at the publication schedule you mentioned, it's certainly going to take a long time to complete the series. I hope they will speed it up a little. Anyway, it's a great opportunity to obtain a complete collection of Bing's commercial records in good quality. I hope that the response will be sufficient for John to continue the project.

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## VIDEO NEWS

We're very happy to report that the member who so generously compiled the first 3 hour video cassette featuring the musical highlights from Bings 1930's movies has now completed two more tapes which take the series up to Robin and the Seven Hoods. Only one or two features are missing: Top of the Morning and Man on Fire (which is not a musical anyway!)

Now how can you borrow one of these videos? Write us a letter stating your preference of ONE tape only (no alternatives please) and enclosing $5 ($3 borrowing fee, $2 packing and postage). Please be prepared for a long wait as most members seem to keep their tapes for three weeks! All orders will be dealt with in order of receipt.

The tapes are identified VIDEO 1, VIDEO 2 and VIDEO 3.

# ☆ FROM OUT OF THE PAST ☆

Extracts from "Bing Crosby and the Bing Crosby Style"
by Dr J.T.H.Mize, originally published in 1946.

In Bing's "crooning days" his style and that of Russ Colombo were comewhat similar, though their basic voice qualities were different. In vocal production and style, both were "crooners" and to "croon", according to lexicographers, is "to sing softly and monotonously... to utter a low murmering sound." Crooning is an extreme opposite of the gesticulatory voluminosity of the Grand European Manner (which of course does not include such modern male chanters as Jean Sablon, who is an accented European who has adopted a form of crooning). Of course eclectic Bing took something from the crooning manner and integrated it into the amalgam that is his. That "something" was the pianoissimo intimacy into which he frequently excurses for contrast, consistent with Charles Henderson's advice that "Baritones can well afford to concentrate on their pianissimo intimacy into which he frequently excurses for moderation, not vocal hog-calling." What Mark Shubert once said of Roland Hayes can be very validly said of Bing: "His softer tones have a quality that no Melchior or Martinelli could ever produce."

Crosby's present style is more of a distinct departure, rather than an evolution, from that soft crooning style with its occasional bo-bu-booing. As a member of Whiteman's Rhythm Boys he sang with a small "whispering" voice - a surface tone - but this has developed and matured into a full, very masculine-sounding rich, round baritone with something of a husky resonance. In his days with ARnhiem the metamorphosis of his voice and style was beginning; the many avid collectors of Crosbyana term this his "Arnhiem voice", when Bing's voice was taking on more fullness and increasing in quality. During one period, as exampled by some of the Brusnsick reissues, Bing almost went to the opposite extreme of "crooning" and seemed to be trying to outshout his accompanists, tending towards shrillness. (And a good thing too!!! B.M.) An interested student can trace the gradual lowering and rounding-out of Bing's voice, as well as the stylistic transition, thru the phonograph recordings made thru the years.

The "middle period" of his vocal style may be heard in two albums,

re-releases of early recordings, which Brunswick-Decca issued again in 1943 and 1944 as well as a re-issue of an album by Columbia records. Mr Howard Levine, one of the authirities on Crosbyana, refers to this "middle period" voice as Bing's "Brunswick voice" and further divides that into two periods, an 'early Brunswick" and a "late Brunswick", a very valid but technical delineation and one which demands consideration of the rarer records to demonstrate.

Mr Levine dates this "early middle" or "early Brunswick" voice from Bing's debut on that label with "OUT OF NOWHERE" on number 6090 "and was continued on in the 6300 and 6400 series although an appreciable modification is noticed." It was in this "early Brunswick" period that the two albums of Brunswick reissues represent. The "late Brunswick" period embraces the Brunswicks from the eraly 6500's thru BR-6593 of "I'M HUMMIN' - I'M WHISTLIN' - I'M SINGIN'" which was actually Bing's last recording for Brunswick.

If any one recording can represent the point at which Bing "leveled himself off" leaving the scat singing and bo-buh-booing and moving in as an intimate-sounding big-voiced singer, it is on BR-6594 of "MOONSTRUCK"; this well establishes the "second Middle" period and in Mr Levine's opinion, it is at this stage that Bing was at his zenith, "the true Crosby voice" or the "real Crosby".

The following nine recordingw, which Mr Levine feels will pass on to posterity as the height of Bing's crowning success and glory are indeed highly superior examplings: MOONSTRUCK, I'VE GOT TO PASS YOUR HOUSE, MY LOVE, BLACK MOONLIGHT, THE DAY YOU CAME ALONG, THE LAST ROUND-UP, AFTER SUNDOWN, TEMPTATION and OUR BIG LOVE SCENE. It is interesting to note that these were recorded in June and August of 1933, five of the nine having been done on the same day, 9 June 1933, a very profitable and prolific date for Bing.

One of the positive attractions of Bing's voice and manner today is that it creates the impression or illusion that his singing is being aimed directly at and personally to the listener. That is to say his voice has "intimacy". As radio announcer Roland Dicks expresses it, "Bing sounds as though he were leaning over the piano in your own parlor singing to you." It is quite apt to say that Bing sings in a "conversational style". Voice-teacher Marguerite

Haymes refers to her pupils to "That 'in the room' intimacy... the sort of intimacy that is typical of Crosby - you talk on sound, singing the melody very softly.....It means you sing as though you were speaking."

Relatedly, it is readily apparent that Bing's voice approaches perfection in phonogeneity; his present and matured voice records and broadcasts unusually well. With tegard to Bing's voice being highly recordable and broadcastable, Henderson again, says, "Crosby can roar in that highly photogenic voice of his and the needle (the skittering needle of the Volume Indicator) will barely move, whereas a French opera singer can almost throw the station off the air with a cutting whisper."

In addition to his straight singing, this top-rank songster has three other related abilities which are heard too seldom today. Only on his earliest recordings, and on a few isolated ones on his recent releases, does he engage in "scat singing" - which may seem to some to be nonsensical gibberish but which is a really highly improvisation requiring superior concepts and abilities. It is a truly creative manner of instrumental-style singing, and Bing was one of it's first popular practitioners.

Bing's other unheralded ability, and another palm leaf for the boy, is his highly embellished "whistling style" with its musicianly trills and tremolos, a somewhat unusual field of musical art in which much current interest is being demonstrated by such artists as Tex Beneke, Fred Lowery, and certain concert whistlers, even by longer-form composers. Bing's whistling efforts seem perfectly to suit his style and personality, tho samplings are to be found only on brief passages of several recordings and occasionally, tho not-neraly-often-enough, on his new Philco Radio Show.

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And there we'll end this below-averge edition of "The Crosby Voice". I'm sorry that it is not up to the usual standard, but I hope that you found something of interest in a couple of its pages at least. Our February issue will be back up to standard, I promise. My very best wishes to you and yours for the Christmas season.

Bob Hackbarth

# BACK PAGE SPECIAL




A John Sands Greetings Card. Code TD. Item No 01/8